UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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BEVERLY SHORES/CENTURY OF PROGRESS ARCHITECTURAL DISTRICT

The Beverly Shores/Century of Progress Architectural District contains six houses which were exhibit houses that were moved to Beverly Shores, Indiana, from the 1933-34-Century of Progress - Exposition in Chicago.

The district boundaries coincide with the plot lines around these six structures (see enclosed site map). Both the original and the present sites of the Exposition buildings are on the southern shore of Lake Michigan. The significance of the structures is unrelated to their current location.

Several nonhistoric structures are located within the district boundaries, as indicated on the site map. These structures do not contribute to the significance of the district:

#### Buildings Within the District

WIEBOLDT-ROSTONE HOUSE (HS-4); 208 Lake Front Drive Sponsors: Rostone, Inc., Lafayette, Indiana; and Wieboldt Department Store, Chicago, Illinois Architect: Walter Scholer, Lafayette, Indiana

The Wieboldt-Rostone House measures 33 by 70 feet. It originally rested on a poured slab foundation, but due to site conditions at Beverly Shores, it now has a deep basement. A tar and gravel composition roofing replaces the original Rostone tiles on the flat roof. The north window in the living room is a replacement.

Rostone, an experimental material which covered the exterior and much of the interior of this structure, was composed of alkaline earths, shale and limestone aggregate. It was described in promotional material as being "durable, strong, weatherproof, and fire-resistant as stone" but it did not live up to this advertisement. Approximately 30 years after construction, the Wieboldt-Rostone House had to be resurfaced because of accelerated deterioration. Unfortunately, the cementatious synthetic stone chosen to recover the building, permastone, is also failing. Overall; the structure is in deteriorated condition.

PERIOD	AF	REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CH	ECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW	
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see individual descriptions

TATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Beverly Shores/Century of Progress Architectural District is significant because it encompasses houses from the 1933-34 Chicago Century of Progress Exposition that comprised a portion of an exhibit known as the Home and Industrial Arts Group. Many of these structures were innovative and displayed engineering and construction technologies that have become an integral part of modern residential architecture.

In hosting the 1893 Columbian Exposition, Chicago made the classicism of the French Beaux Arts tradition popular with an American public accustomed to the eclectic revivals of the Victorian architectural periods. This trend dominated American architecture during the first part of the twentieth century. Forty years later, Chicago's Century of Progress Exposition was the national showcase for new directions in American architecture, which once again followed a European precedent, the 1925 Paris Exposition.

The Century of Progress Exposition was conceived in the prosperous 1920s, but the nation was deep in the Great Depression by the opening date. Modern technology, the general theme of the exposition, gave the nation something new during a bleak economic period. New materials, nontraditional construction methods, and efficient new mechanical systems came together to form structures with no obvious neo-classical associations. Electric floodlights, searchlights and neon highlighted the polychromed facades and stylized motifs of the major exhibition buildings. The architecture of the Century of Progress Expostion was progressive, which meant either the Art Deco or International Style."

One of the more popular exhibits, the Home and Industrial Arts Group, consisted of 13 residences, some with guest houses or other dependencies. A collection of these "modern" homes, the Armoo-Ferro-Mayflower House, the Cypress Log Cabin and its Guest House, the Florida Tropical House, the House of Tomorrow, the Wieboldt- Rostone House, and the Universal House's Country Home were moved

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet 9-1

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As originally designed, the house was detailed with large rectangular slabs of slightly roughened, buff colored Rostone. These panels were "laid" in a stack bond with the joints sealed with mastic. Clips were used to attach the synthetic stone to a prefabricated steel framework. This construction technique emphasized the horizontal massing of the building, a design feature conspicuously missing in the existing ashlar patterned permastone. The exterior retains the original multicolored Art Deco-inspired doorway surround and decorative window grill. These colors repeat the trim colors used in 1933 for the roof copings. Much of the interior Rostone which was used for wall panels, floor tiles and fireplace surround is also extant.

Rostone representatives stressed that the Wieboldt-Rostone House was not a "mass-produced" model and that any style structure could be built with the material. They described the Exposition house as a modern house with "a charming wrought iron balcony above the entrance to give the house a touch of Mediterranean atmosphere." Public response to the material was great; after the exhibit closed there was a long waiting period to obtain the material. Present exterior covering not withstanding, the Wieboldt-Rostone House maintains much of its original design integrity. The bold massing and the colored Rostone on exterior decorative detailing and interior surfaces are among the features still evident, in addition to those described above. In spite of the alterations to the original structure, it retains its integrity of design.

CYPRESS LOG CABIN (HS-8) AND GUEST HOUSE (HS-9); 215 Lake Front Drive

Sponsor: Southern Cypress Manufacturers' Association,
Jacksonville, Florida
Architect: Murray D. Hetherington, Chicago, Illinois

The Cypress Log Cabin measures 67 by 20 feet with a 15- by 17-foot ell. It rests on a concrete slab foundation. The porch on the west has been enclosed with screening. The roof is two intersecting gables with wooden shingles. Exposed rafters and a carved bargeboard embellish the exterior. The cabin's condition is good.

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The Cypress Log Cabin and Guest House were unique among the innovative domestic architecture of the Home and Industrial Arts group at the Exposition. Deviating dramatically from the experimental materials featured in the other exhibit houses, the purpose of these structures was to show the many uses and longevity of a traditional material, red cypress. Capitalizing on the rustic appearance of the untreated wood species, the cabin was "a typical mountain lodge, for those attuned to nature." Pecky cypress log siding with characteristic fungus holes pickled with white paint was used to face the building. This semicircular siding gave the effect of solid log construction without the expense. Paneling and furniture of cypress were used in the interior of both structures.

Dominating the great room of the Cypress Log Cabin is a large limestone fireplace that rises 13 feet to the ridge bean pole. This fireplace, in excellent condition, is the focal point of the interior. Originally the great room was devoted to the display of cypress artifacts. Among the items were shingles from Mt. Vernon, a 150-year-old Seminole Indian canoe, 200-year-old Spanish prison stocks, and a 120-year-old French water main from New Orleans.

#### Cypress Log Cabin Guest House (HS-9)

The Guest House is 87 feet by 18 feet with concrete footings. It is of one-story frame construction with pecky-cypress and ship lap siding. The gable roof is covered with wooden shingles with carved rafters and bargeboard. Additions on the house include an enclosed porch and rear storage room.

The Guest House was part of an assemblage of structures used to create a mountain lodge atmosphere. Fences, arbors, and bridges, decorated with cypress knees carved to suggest animal heads, reptiles, and fantasy creatures were used extensively in the original scheme. Little of this detail remains, although some of the large arbor columns are still standing. The Guest House is in fair condition.

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FLORIDA TROPICAL HOUSE (HS-5); 210 Lake Front Drive
Architect: Robert Law Weed, Miami, Florida
Associate Architects: Pasit and Steward, Miami, Florida
Interior furnishing designers (1933): James S. Kuhne and Percival
Goodman
Interior decorator (1934): Marjorie Thorsch

The 83- by 35-foot house now has a deep basement, although it originally rested on a concrete slab. Masonry walls which originally enclosed a courtyard in front of the garage were not rebuilt on the present site. The house is pink, the original color.

The Florida Tropical House was the only state-sponsored house in the Home and Industrial Arts Group. It was constructed solely of materials from its sponsoring state, including travertine, limestone, portland cement, and clay tile--even the aggregate was shipped from Florida to the Exposition site. Designed for the "well-to-do" who spent their winters on the southern coasts, the designers further narrowed their potential clients to those "who saw the old be-dormered, the be-gabled dream house as a dream that belonged in a fairy tale." 5

Architect Weed planned the roof, which was floored with ceramic tiles, to be a major living space. It was divided into a loggia, a deck for sunbathing, and a recreation area. This entire area was enclosed with an aluminum streamline deck rail, reminiscent of an oceanliner. A similar railing was also used on the exterior steps that go from deck to front grade, and on the grand staircase that rises from the living room to the second floor loggia. All of this original metalwork is extant.

Designed with thick masonry walls and deep window overhangs which are an integral part of the floor slabs, the house is structurally more appropriate to the climate of southern Florida than the Midwest. The harsh climate with great variances in temperature has forced the recovering of the original roof with built-up roofing. In addition, the heavy loads of snow and ice have necessitated the use of supports under the masonry overhangs. The structure's condition is fair.

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Like many of the other exhibit homes, the Florida Tropical House evolved during the two seasons the Exposition was open. Most of the changes were confined to the furnishings, although some interior wall finishes also changed. James S. Kuhne and Percival Goodman were responsible for the 1933 Style Moderne version of the interior. They utilized the latest in mechanical and custom-designed furnishings, including an art collection with works by contemporary artists Max Weber and Stuart Davis.

In 1934 the furnishings and some interior alterations were redesigned by Marjorie Thorsch. Her choices were "modernized Victorian because one is always comfortable with familiar things." The 1934 alterations include removal of the pigmented structural glass (Vitrolite) fireplace surround in the living room, the addition of backpanels (risers) in the open metal staircase, and the addition of two large stylized murals of tropical birds and foliage. She left unchanged the 1933 pigmented structural glass in the bathroom. The walls and the original Crane fixtures are still in the house.

HOUSE OF TOMORROW (HS-7); 214 Lake Front Drive Sponsor: Century Homes
Architect: George Fred Keck, Chicago, Illinois
Associate Architect: Leland Atwood, Chicago

The three-story dodecagon is 42 feet in diameter. Its exterior walls are copper painted flat black and it has a composition roof. Alterations include the carport addition on the southeast, the operable windows, conversion of the garage and airplane hangar to living space, and the enclosure of a porch.

Paradoxically, inspiration for Keck's futuristic house, the House of Tomorrow, came from an 1854 octagon house that fascinated him as a child in his hometown of Watertown, Wisconsin. Like the octagon house, the House of Tomorrow utilized the central core for structural stability, as well as for the circulation of people and utility services. In the House of Tomorrow, there are no bearing walls within the confines of the minimum perimeter shape; all loads are carried by the steel framework. Using this structural system, Keck believed that housing of the future could have

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unlimited flexibility; additional floors could be stacked upon each other and rooms could be divided with partitions where needed. He dramatically demonstrated this flexibility in the House of Tomorrow by including a small airplane hangar on the first level.

As first shown at the Exposition's opening, the House of Tomorrow had large panes of fixed glass. The windows were changed to their present operable configuration before the the structure was moved to Beverly Shores in the spring of 1935. Keck also authorized the replacement of the painted vermiculite board that was used on the 1933 exterior to standing seam copper for the 1934 season.

Many of the original interior finishes are still present in the house. Black pigmented glass was used in the living room interior to punctuate the original interior of greys with flamingo accents. Original end-grain block wood flooring is located in a bedroom as is the original banded synthetic flooring on the third floor sunroom. Like the other flat-roofed houses in the district, moisture penetration through the roof has been a persistent maintenance problem. The house is generally in good condition.

ARMCO-FERRO-MAYFLOWER HOUSE (HS-6); 212 Lake Front Drive
Sponsors: American Rolling Mill Company, Middletown, Ohio; Ferro
Enamel Corporation, Cleveland, Ohio
Interior Sponsor: Mayflower Wall Paper, Chicago, Illinois
Architect Robert Smith, Jr., Cleveland, Ohio

The two-story frameless all steel house measures 34 by 24 feet and has an exterior finish of porcelain steel and a flat roof covered with bituminous roofing. There is a third floor solarium overlooking the roof deck. A porch was added on the first floor and the garage space was converted into living space. There was also a guest house at the Exposition, but it was not moved to Beverly Shores. Before the Century of Progress Exposition, neither the American Rolling Mill Company nor the Ferro Enamel Corporation built steel houses. These demonstration houses were to be used to promote steel as a residential building material. In the Armco-Ferro-Mayflower prototype, full floor-sized steel panels were bolted together without any framework. Insulation was

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then sandwiched between the exterior porcelain enamel panels and the steel core. Promotional material stated that any conventional siding could be used as an interior or exterior finish. Wallboard was used in the house interior as a subsurface for the Mayflower wall papers.

The Armco-Ferro-Mayflower House was one of three structures in the Home and Industrial Arts Group of steel construction, which was promoted as highly durable, inexpensive, and the solution to America's burgeoning residential housing needs. Ironically, during the Exposition the unconventionally designed and constructed Armco-Ferro-Mayflower House was familiarly known as the "House of Mayflower Wallpapers,"7 and its unusual construction drew less attention than its interior finish. Mayflower, a cosponsor of the house, had decorated the interior in "crisp, cheerful yellows, in all its different shades," a scheme which caught the public's eye.

In the corrosive lakeside atmosphere, rust is becoming a problem for the house. The gaskets are starting to fail and moisture is penetrating. However, a building conservation program has been started to arrest this deleterious action.

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in the spring of 1935 to their present sites in Beverly Shores, Indiana. All of these houses were located in a group on the lakeshore, with the exception of the Universal House's Country Home which was located further inland and was later destroyed by fire. The group of six remaining Exposition houses are now within the boundaries of the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.

The relocation of the structures to Beverly Shores was the promotional scheme of real estate developer Robert Bartlett. The houses were purchased at a fraction of their original cost, moved to the site, and were repositioned under the supervision of Leo Post, Beverly Shores' chief builder. The Armco-Ferro-Mayflower House, the Florida Tropical House, and the House of Tomorrow were floated from Chicago across Lake Michigan on a barge. A 200-foot long dock was constructed to accommodate the arrival of the buildings. The dock is now in ruins with only a few pilings remaining.

Built for exhibition, the move to Beverly Shores was actually a second chapter in the Home and Industrial Arts Group's architectural evolution. Differences in soil conditions required the addition of basements to both the Florida Tropical House and the Wieboldt-Rostone House. The Florida Tropical House witnessed a considerable change in setting from the subtropical vegetation planted at the Exposition to a more traditional Great Lakes setting at Beverly Shores. Conversely, the unrestrained growth around the Cypress Log Cabin Houses at Beverly Shores achieves the overgrown forest effect only partly achieved in the Exhibition of 1933. In spite of these minor changes, all of the structures retain their integrity of design.

The houses in the Beverly Shores/Century of Progress Architectural District exhibit many of the innovative ideas promoted for "modern" residential housing in the 1920s and '30s. Mechanization for domestic chores, integrated interior and exterior living spaces, and the judicious use of steel as a building material have been incorporated into contemporary, residential building practice. Other materials or ideas such as Rostone, attached airplane hangars, and all-steel housing did not attain widespread popularity.

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